

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SSM-03 ACDA-12 TRSE-00  
CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00  
NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 IO-13  
/100 W

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P R 091104Z MAR 78  
FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5367  
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO  
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS  
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM  
AMEMBASSY JIDDA  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 AMMAN 2283

E.O.11652: GDS  
TAGS: PGOV, PBOR, JO, US, XF  
SUBJECT: CURRENT JORDANIAN VIEWS ON PEACE PROCESS

1. IN WAKE OF ATHERTON VISIT WE FIND THAT ATTITUDES  
OF THOSE IN JORDAN WHO ARE INFLUENTIAL IN SHAPING  
PUBLIC OPINION REMAIN MUCH THE SAME AS THEY WERE  
BEFORE VISIT--VERY SKEPTICAL THAT THERE WILL BE ANY  
GENUINE PROGRESS IN PEACE PROCESS DUE TO WHAT IS  
SEEN AS ISRAELI INTRANSIGENCE, AND A CONSEQUENT  
FIRMNESS OF VIEW THAT JORDAN SHOULD NOT JOIN  
NEGOTIATIONS UNTIL SOME ISRAELI FLEXIBILITY IS  
EVIDENT, ESPECIALLY ON THE ISSUE OF WITHDRAWAL FROM  
THE WEST BANK.

2. WHILE KING HUSSEIN'S VIEWS LEAD JORDANIAN  
OPINION, HE IS ALSO VERY RESPONSIVE TO THE PUBLIC  
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MOOD, AND THERE IS CONSTANT INTERACTION WITH OPINION  
OF INFLUENTIAL JORDANIANS. HE HAS MENTIONED TO US  
THAT HE FEELS HE IS IN TOUCH WITH CURRENT JORDANIAN  
OPINION AND THAT HIS STAND ON NEGOTIATIONS IS  
SUPPORTED BY MOST OF THE PUBLIC. OUR DISCUSSIONS  
LEAD US TO BELIEVE THIS IS CORRECT. INDEED, WE HAVE NOT BEEN  
ABLE TO TURN UP A JORDANIAN OR PALESTINIAN WHO BELIEVES KING

WOULD BE SIWE TO ENTER NEGOTIATIONS NOW.

3. VARIETY OF FACTORS SHAPE

JORDANIAN VIEWS. THE KEY POINT FOR JORDANIANS IS THAT THEY NOW SEE THE BEGIN GOVERNMENT AS HAVING HARDENED ON THE WEST BANK ISSUE (NO WITHDRAWAL IS POSSIBLE), BUT ALSO AS BECOMING EVEN MORE INTRANSIGENT THAN PAST ISRAELI GOVERNMENTS (CONTINUING SETTLEMENT ACTIVITIES). OTHER IMPORTANT FACTORS ARE:

-- AN UNWILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT THE CONSIDERABLE RISKS OF ENTERING NEGOTIATIONS UNLESS THERE IS SOME ASSURANCE OF MOVEMENT LEADING TO THE HOPE OF A REAL AGREEMENT;

--A FEELING THAT BEGIN'S INTERPRETATION OF RESOLUTION 242 CONFIRMS THEIR WELL-FOUNDED SUSPICIONS OF HIM;

--A GROWING FEELING THAT THE SADAT INITIATIVE HAS FAILED AND THE BEST COURSE FOR JORDAN NOW WOULD BE TO KEEP TO THE MIDDLE GROUND TO ALLOW FOR MANEUVERING IN WHATEVER SITUATION THE FUTURE HOLDS;

--UNCERTAINTY OVER SAUDI ATTITUDES (JORDANIAN PRESS ALMOST IMMEDIATELY SAW A DEEPER POLITICAL MEANING IN POSTPONEMENT OF ATHERTON TRIP TO SAUDI ARABIA);

--CONCERN THAT IN ENTERING NEGOTIATIONS THEY COULD SIMPLY BE PROVIDING A COVER FOR EGYPT TO MAKE A SEPARATE PEACE, LEAVING THEM WITH NOTHING TO SHOW  
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FOR IT BUT ARAB RETRIBUTION;

--SLIM LIKELIHOOD THAT ANY CREDIBLE PALESTINIANS COULD BE FOUND TO JOIN NEGOTIATIONS WITH HUSSEIN, COUPLED WITH A GREATER NEED FOR THEM THE MORE UNDERTAIN THE GENERAL PROSPECTS OF NEGOTIATIONS BECOME; AND

--BELIEF THAT THE U.S. HAS YET TO DEMONSTRATE THAT IT IS PREPARED TO PRESS THE ISRAELIS ON THE HARD ISSUES.

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INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 SSM-03 ACDA-12 TRSE-00

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NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /107 W

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P R 091104Z MAR 78  
FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5368  
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO  
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 AMMAN 2283

4. IT IS DIFFICULT TO PREDICT REACTIONS HERE IF THERE SHOULD BE A SHIFT IN ISRAEL'S BASIC POSITION GIVEN THIS COMPLEX OF NEGATIVE ATTITUDES; HOWEVER, IF A SHIFT OCCURRED TO A MORE FLEXIBLE ISRAELI POSITION WHICH SEEMED TO ACCEPT THE PRINCIPLE OF WITHDRAWAL ON THE WEST BANK, WE BELIEVE IT IS REASONABLE TO ASSUME THERE WOULD BE A RE-EXAMINATION BY BOTH THE KING AND INFORMED PUBLIC OF PRESENT JORDANIAN POSITION. NOT ONLY BECAUSE THE ISRAELIS HAD MOVED, BUT ALMOST MORE IMPORTANTLY BECAUSE WE WOULD BE SEEN AS THE PARTY WHICH CAUSED THE MOVE. BY THE SAME TOKEN, IF THE ISRAELI POSITON REMAINS INFLEXIBLE, WE ARE LIKELY TO HEAR AN EVEN MORE FORCEFUL REPETITION OF PRESENT POSITION, WITH LESS CONSIDERATION BEING GIVEN TO A CREATIVE LOOK AT THE POSSIBLE EVOLUTION OF THE PEACE PROCESS.

5. SINCE JORDANIANS REGARD THE PEACE PROCESS AS  
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STALEMATED AND THUS DESIRE "TO WAIT AND SEE," WE CAN EXPECT AT LEAST SOME SUPERFICIAL NOD TO THE PLO. THE GOJ SEES IT USEFUL TO KEEP IN TOUCH WITH THE PLO WHILE EGYPT IS ISOLATED FROM THE REST OF THE ARAB WORLD, JORDAN GETS FURTHER ROOM FOR MANEUVER AND CAN ALSO SEE SOME ADVANTAGES TO DOING SO IN DEALING WITH SYRIA. IN THIS CONNECTION, WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE KING HAS RECENTLY RECEIVED ANOTHER LETTER FROM YASSIR ARAFAT. ALSO, AGAINST THE PRESENTLY FAR-OUT CONTINGENCY THAT JORDAN SHOULD GO INTO NEGOTIATIONS AT SOME FUTURE TIME THE GOJ SEES ITS OPENING TO THE PLO AS BEGINNING A PROCESS OF "CONDITIONING" THE PLO TO THE REALITIES OF NEGOTIATIONS. JORDAN WOULD IN THAT CASE ALSO WANT PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATIVES. FINALLY THE PLO, THROUGH

TACIT OR OTHER ACTION, COULD BE HELPFUL IN RELIEVING JORDAN OF EFFECTS OF THE RABAT SUMMIT DECISION. THIS MAY BE IN PART THE REASON WHY SIX IMPRISONED FEDAYEEN WERE LAST WEEK RELEASED BY JORDAN.

6. COMMENT: JORDANIAN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE POSITION IS HARDENING AND WE SEE NO WAY TO PREVENT THIS AS LONG AS THEY CONTINUE TO PERCEIVE A HARDENING OF THE ISRAELI POSITION. THIS SITUATION WAS AGGRAVATED BY SHARP JORDANIAN REACTIONS TO THE ISRAELI PRESS CAMPAIGN TO GET JORDAN TO JOIN THE NEGOTIATIONS AND WHICH WAS SEEN HERE AS AN EFFORT TO DEFLECT PRESSURES ON ISRAEL. HOWEVER, SHOULD THERE BE SOME SIGNS OF FUTURE ISRAELI FLEXIBILITY, WE WOULD EXPECT THAT THE STRONG REASONS FOR JORDANIAN PARTICIPATION IN THE NEGOTIATIONS WILL EMERGE AGAIN.  
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## Message Attributes

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